

STUDENT SERVICES AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Utah Computer Adaptive Assessment System Frequently Asked Questions

1. What was the process to select a state computer adaptive assessment system?

January 6, 2011 State Board of Education Meeting

- The Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee directs staff to prepare detailed information in regards to the K-12 computer adaptive assessment pilots for the February committee meeting.
- The Board adopts the Promises to Keep Strategic Plan for 2011 which includes, "Support the work of the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium and adopt computer Adaptive Assessment in Language Arts and Math by 2014-15".
- Utah continues as a Governing State in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium with five USOE staff in key leadership positions.

February 4, 2011 State Board of Education Meeting

 The Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee receive information and cost projections to implement statewide computer adaptive testing. Information includes the technology standards/requirements that schools will need to implement the tests and a draft implementation plan.

March 4, 2011 State Board of Education Meeting

 The Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee continues discussions on the information received in the February 4, 2011 meeting in regards to state implementation of computer adaptive testing.

April 8, 2011 State Board of Education Meeting

- The Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee approve on first reading two new rules: R277-405 Requirements for Assessment Pilot Programs and R277-404 Requirements for Assessments of Student Achievement.
- The Board approves R277-404 and R277-405 on 2nd reading.
- The Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee also review the current status and success of the K-12 Computer Adaptive Testing Pilot.
- The Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee presents to the Board draft legislation on computer adaptive testing and technology for online testing funding.

May 5, 2011 State Board of Education Meeting

 The Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee amend R277-405 Requirements for Assessment Pilot Programs to include the recently appropriated funding for large districts for online testing.

- The Board approves R277-405 Requirements for Assessment Pilot Programs on second reading.
- The Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee approve on first reading and the Board approves on second reading amendments to R277-473 Testing Procedures. The amendments make these two rules consistent in their language.
- The Board approves R277-404 Requirements for Assessments of Student Achievement on third reading.
- The Board reviewes draft legislation on computer adaptive testing and technology for online testing funding.

June 3, 2011 State Board of Education Meeting

- The Board receives updates on the progress of the Computer Adaptive Testing and the Online Testing legislation.
- The Board approves on third reading R277-405 Requirements for Assessment Pilot Programs and R277-473 Testing Procedures.

February 3, 2012 State Board of Education Meeting

- The Data, Assessment and Accountability Committee receives presentations from schools and districts participating in the K-12 Computer Adaptive Testing Pilot.
- Judy Park gives a presentation to the board which includes considerations in choosing a computer adaptive assessment system, assessment quality indicators and options for future assessments.
- The Board approves the creation of a stakeholder group to develop an RFP for a Utah Statewide Computer Adaptive Assessment System for science, mathematics and language arts.

March 2012, HB 15 was passed in the 2012 legislative general session.

• This bill provides \$6,700,000 to "annually require each school district and charter school, as applicable, to administer a computer adaptive assessment system that is (a) adopted by the State Board of Education; and (b) aligned to Utah's common core."

March 2, 2012 State Board of Education Meeting

- The Board approves the committee members for the Computer Adaptive Assessment RFP writing committee.
 - o Chair, Dr. Gary Carlston, Former Deputy Superintendent, USOE
 - o Laurel Brown, State Board
 - o Dave Crandall, State Board
 - o Tami Pyfer, State Board
 - Tim Beagley , State Charter Board
 - o Kim Horiuchi, Canyons District Board
 - Clint Johnson, Sevier District Board
 - o Verne Henshaw, Alpine District Superintendent
 - Jim Shank, Juab District Superintendent
 - Marshall Topham, Washington District Title I Director
 - o Mary Ellen Kettle, Duchesne District Assessment Director
 - Logan Toone, Davis District Assessment Director
 - Judy Park, USOE Associate Superintendent
 - o John Jesse, USOE Assessment Director
- The Board approves the addition of two parents and two teachers on the RFP writing committee.
- The parents and teachers asked to join the committee
 - o Maryjo Montoya, Iron District Special Education Teacher

- Sheri Heiter, Weber District Teacher
- Joylin Lincoln, Parent, Lakeview Academy
- Terryl Warner, Parent, Cache District

April 2, 2012 The RFP writing committee begins meeting

Superintendent Shumway welcomes the committee and encourages them to write an RFP that
engages the broadest spectrum possible in the marketplace and encourages innovative
solutions that will result in an assessment system that meets all the needs of Utah students and
educators.

April 13, 2012 State Board of Education Meeting

- Dr. Gary Carlson, Chair of the RFP writing committee gives a presention to the Board. The
 presentation and discussion include a report on the RFP writing committee and the need for the
 Board to determine a selection committee to review the proposals and make a recommendation
 to State Purchasing.
- The Board approves the addition of a Charter School Teacher on the RFP writing committee.
- Sonia Woodbury, City Academy Charter is later invited to participate on the committee.

May 3, 2012 State Board of Education Meeting

- Superintendent Shumway suggests that Utah's status for the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium be changed from Governing to Advisory.
- The Board receives an update on the RFP writing committee and information on the RFP selection committee and the State Purchasing requirement that in order for a Board member to participate in the vendor selection they must be a member of the RFP selection committee.

June 1, 2012 State Board of Education Meeting

- The Board approves adding a member of Coalition of Minorities Advisory Committee (CMAC) to the Computer Adaptive Assessment RFP writing committee
- Charlene Lui, CMAC is later invited to participate on the committee.
- The Board discusses Utah's participation in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium. All
 USOE staff had resigned their leadership positions as of May 30 and are no longer engaged in
 any SMARTER Balanced work. The Board approves putting this issue on the August Board
 Agenda
- Board members on the RFP writing committee provide the board with an update.
- Board leadership report their suggestions for the RFP selection committee be a technology representative from a regional service center; assessment directors from a large and small school district; two district superintendents representing experience with different assessment systems; a special education representative from a district; the USOE associate superintendent over assessment, the USOE assessment director, and a USOE IT representative. Board members interested in participating on the committee are solicited.
- Superintendent Shumway shares that district superintendents have strong feelings about ensuring that the RFP is not predisposed to any one vendor.
- Board Leadership discussed an interest in determining a process for individuals outside the RFP committee to provide input to the RFP.

July 2012 Stakeholder Survey solicited comments

- A survey was sent to LEAs and posted on the USOE website encouraging comments on the Computer Adaptive Assessment RFP
- There are 52 Responses: 63% LEA Staff, 28% School Staff, 9% Board of Education, 13% Other

The writing committee reviews all responses and adjusts the RFP based on the responses

July 2012 State Board Members are encouraged to review the RFP and provide edits and comments

- The Computer Adaptive Assessment RFP is made available for any interested Board members to review and provide suggestions and/or edits.
- Three Board members (Debra Roberts, Joel Coleman, Kim Birmingham) and Superintendent Shumway review the RFP and provide responses.
- The writing committee reviews all responses and adjusts the RFP based on the board member responses

July 2012 Board Leadership selects individual participants of the RFP selection committee

August 3, 2012 State Board of Education Meeting

The Board directs Utah to withdraw from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

August 20 2012 State Purchasing posts the Computer Adaptive Assessment System RFP

September 7, 2012 State Board of Education Meeting

- The Board receives copies of the Computer Adaptive Assessment System RFP that was released on August 20, 2012.
- Michael Rigby, USOE procurement officer, provides information to the board on the State Purchasing requirements and process.
- The Board discusses if the optional formative assessment component should be removed from the RFP. Board action is to keep the optional formative assessment component in the RFP.

October 1 2012 Computer Adaptive Assessment System RFP Proposals Due

October 23 2012 RFP Selection Committee reviews the RFP proposals and selects finalists

Thirteen proposals (representing all the major assessment vendors) are reviewed

October 29 2012 RFP Selection Committee views Vendor Demonstrations

October 30 2012 RFP Selection Committee determines the recommended vendor

November 1 – 28, 2012 State Purchasing determines final vendor selection

November 26, 2012 State Purchasing releases the successful bid award for AIR (American Institutes of Research)

November 26, 2012 USOE holds a stakeholder webcast announcing the contract award.

2. What are the State Purchasing requirements and processes?

RFP Guidelines & Processes

Prepared by Michael G Rigby - Procurement Officer USOE

RFP Processes:
Writing the RFP, and Scoring Documents
Internal Document Review
State Purchasing Review
RFP Release to the Street/Market
Evaluation Committee Selection
Proposals Received on Due Date
Proposals Evaluated and Scored
Cost Scores
Contract Award
Guidelines:

Determination -

The use of an RFP is either mandated from the Legislature or determined to be the best procurement method to use for the situation by a combination of the Agency Procurement Officer (Purchasing Agent), the appropriate section management user group, and State Purchasing. One way to look at an RFP method of procurement is to solve a problem that exists within the agency that needs to be fixed but there are no hard clear specifications to solve this problem available, or where price is not to be the deciding factor and there needs to be evaluation of offerors abilities and qualifications so the RFP document is written using the best subject matter experts we have at our disposal, the Procurement Officer for the Agency to ensure the Procurement Code and other applicable laws are adhered to, and it is written in such a way that maximizes competition in the market place and all criteria to be scored are fair and equitable. No proposal can be scored on any criteria not published in the RFP document or given points for personal knowledge of an individual evaluator of performance on something not defined and published in the RFP. Doing so can and most likely will cause a protest by other offerors, which can bring the whole procurement to a halt.

Writing the RFP -

State Purchasing provides a RFP template that it likes State Agencies to use for RFPs, or to use as a guideline, to make sure all the important information is included in the document. The RFP should be written by a subject matter expert or combination of experts, individuals who understand what the market place has to offer, and the Procurement Officer who knows the law (Procurement Code, GRAMA and other applicable UCA sections), and sometimes a larger team of these individuals when it comes to

this extremely large procurement such as the one for H.B. 15; the Utah Statewide Computer Adaptive Assessment System. These would be experts from all levels of this project including the Board, and its implementation, and would hopefully cover the broadest area possible without being so large as to be unable to agree on anything, or to accomplish its goals. Until the RFP document is released by Utah State Office of Purchasing through BidSync, it is a private protected document as to not give any advantage to any potential offeror. Anyone working or reviewing this document must sign a confidentiality/conflict of interest document. While the main RFP document is being written the scoring sheet must also be designed, or, the main points that are going to be giving points and what those areas are going to be weighted need to be designated. Not the Law, Procurement Code, or purchasing policies have any provision or mechanism for an elected Board to approve this document prior to its release. Speaking with management at State Purchasing on this issue, the feeling is that they have had input into what is in the document and with who they had selected as being part of the writing committee. Going through a formal approval process does the disservice of making the document public perhaps before it should be, giving some offerors an advantage which could be protested. Also, by approving, or worse not approving, the RFP written by the team put together for that purpose gives the appearance of the Board politically trying to control the process, perhaps to a specific vendor, which is against the law.

Internal Document Review-

The internal review process is extremely vital, especially right now as the Procurement Code is undergoing an overhaul, including the RFP sections. This allows the Procurement Officer to check the citation numbers listed in the document to ensure they are accurate, that the links in fact work and all necessary elements of an RFP are present, and it is in no way too restrictive or written to cater to one vendor or another, but written to allow the maximum amount of competition. It also allows the Superintendent to review the RFP, after signing the confidentiality/conflict of interest document, to review the finished document to make sure it fits with its goal of following language and intent of the Bill. Allows a second look for the people responsible for writing the document to make sure all the components are there, and that there are no errors that are obvious.

State Purchasing Review-

A Finet document is created by the Procurement Officer and approved by his Supervisor issuing a RQM at State Purchasing. Once the RFP document has been completed and reviewed, it is sent to the appropriate Purchasing Agent determined by commodity at State Purchasing, who does their own review of the document and can at that time either ask questions of the Procurement Officer at USOE regarding irregularities or something different about a particular RFP, or they might make changes and send the document back to us to see the changes before the document is released on the street/market. When an RFP is sent up to State Purchasing a schedule is also sent with it. When the preferred date to have RFP released is scheduled, consideration is given as to how long USOE would like it out in the market, how long for questions and answers, and what the due date should be. If the Agent at State Purchasing is in the office and their workload allows, usually these dates fall very close to what have been requested. Purchasing at USOE has been in contact with State Purchasing prior to this to let them know it is coming and to give a heads up of how large a project it is likely to be. State purchasing also likes a list of suggested sources complete with e-mail addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, contact people etc. Once this back and forth review is completed and any changes are made the RFP is released on the street/to the market.

The Purchasing Agent at State Purchasing releases the RFP through BidSync.com to the list of suggested sources, other vendors signed up under the variety of commodity/classification codes the Agent selects in BidSync for the Procurement who are all notified by e-mail, fax, or telephone that the solicitation has been released under a unique procurement number and, if by e-mail, a link to the solicitation (RFP). The information included is the RFP (with scoring sheets), the cost proposal sheet (which must be separate), the State's Standard Terms and Conditions for Agency contracts, Instructions on how to respond, a list of criteria that can make a proposal automatically rejected or deemed non-responsive (i.e. not filling out all the required forms or taking excessive exceptions to the State's Terms), the schedule of due date, how long questions will be accepted and other necessary information in order to respond with an acceptable proposal.

Evaluation Committee Selection-

Just as with the selection of a, or multiple, subject matter experts for the writing of the RFP document the same should be looked at when picking an Evaluation Committee for the proposals that will be received and need to be scored. One great benefit in working in the Education arena is there are a great number of qualified, intelligent and capable individuals willing to help with these Evaluation Committees especially in cases where the resulting contract/product is going to be used by charter schools as well as state, county and city governmental agencies. Select your Evaluation Committee, your Evaluation Committee chair (the Procurement Officer works very well here) and get the confidentiality/conflict of interest forms signed by each member and place in the procurement file. At this time the Evaluation Committee chair and the rest of the Evaluation Committee should determine whether or not they are going to meet and score the proposals together, or more likely with the ever increasing demands on everyone's time that each Evaluation Committee member will score the proposals on their own and must have their scores turned in by a certain date.

Proposals Evaluated and Scored-

Once the technical and cost proposals have been received on the due date there will be contact between State Purchasing and the Procurement Officer from USOE. If proposals were requested to be submitted electronically only then can they be put onto a CD, or multiple CDs, depending on the number of offerors. If they were not, there could be boxes and boxes of proposals. It should be obvious to the Agent at State Purchasing that some proposals do not meet the requirements, do not have all required documents or pieces that were deemed mandatory in the RFP, or some offeror's will not have accepted all required documents (including the State's Terms and Conditions) in BidSync. The Agent at State Purchasing will suggest to USOE that these proposals be deemed Non-responsive or Un-Acceptable. If the Procurement Officer from USOE agrees, an e-mail will be sent to that offeror telling them their proposal has been deemed non-responsive and will not be considered further. They may appeal that decision using the process outlined in the Procurement Code.

The Procurement Officer will pick up the submitted technical proposals from State Purchasing and brought back to USOE. Each member of the evaluation committee will be given a copy of each offeror's technical proposal and evaluation score sheet for each proposal. The members must have the proposals scored and the score sheets back to the Procurement Officer to create the master/summary score spreadsheet by the decided upon deadline. Meetings should be scheduled in advance to ensure everyone on the Evaluation Committee's availability in case certain aspects of proposals need to be discussed further, questions answered or points clarified. If it is felt it is needed, the Evaluation Committee can request oral presentations by all or a certain top percentage of the offerors. Some proposals will be discovered to be non-responsive or unacceptable as the team goes through them, and a letter will be sent to that offeror by State Purchasing indicating they will not be considered further and why. All scores are entered and cross referenced by offeror and criteria in the master/summary score

spreadsheet waiting for the cost scores. The final technical scores, by way of the summary score spreadsheet in addition to all of the signed confidentiality/conflict of interest forms are scanned and sent to the Agent at State Purchasing and the Cost scores are requested.

Cost Scores-

Cost points for RFPs must account for a minimum of 30% of an offerors total score unless a lesser amount is approved in advanced by the State's Chief Procurement Officer/Director of State Purchasing. Once the technical scores and confidentiality/conflict of interest forms are received by the Agent at State Purchasing the cost scores are supposed to be sent to the Procurement Officer here. The RFPs at USOE frequently have multiple options and are a bit more complex than 'the price for A-D = E'. Because of this, State Purchasing will send the cost proposals to the Procurement Officer at USOE rather than just the scores. This is okay with both State Purchasing and the Procurement Officer here, as he worked for State Purchasing for almost eight years, has an extremely strong grasp of the Procurement Code, Purchasing Policies, and Processes. State Purchasing has expressed their faith in his abilities on more than one occasion, and they review all scoring in the end ultimately anyway.

Once the cost points are figured out and added to the master/summary score sheet the final scores are seen. If the top technical scoring proposal has the highest cost score (lowest price), then that would be the ultimate desired scenario. If the total top scoring proposal was among the highest technical scoring proposals and the Evaluation Committee feels awarding to them would accomplish the goals of the RFP but they do not have the lowest price, the following comes into effect: "If the contract is awarded to an offeror other than the lowest cost offeror, and the difference between the cost of the accepted proposal and the lowest proposal exceeds the greater of \$10,000 or 5% of the lowest cost offer, an authorized purchasing entity shall include, an informal written cost-benefit analysis that;

(a) Explains, in general terms, the advantage to the public procurement unit of awarding the contract to the higher cost offered."

If the highest scoring offeror has a very low scoring technical proposal and is only on top because of price, or when reviewing the cost proposals it is evident that there is not a true apples-to-apples comparison, the Evaluation Committee can request a BAFO (Best and Final Offer) with a new pricing proposal sheet that makes things clearer.

Contract Award-

Once the Evaluation Committee has made their determination and, if necessary, written the cost benefit analysis, that analysis is sent to State Purchasing for approval. Once this has been approved a C-3 is prepared here at USOE with the contract documents as approved by the section, the Procurement Officer and, if necessary, USOE's AG. The contract and C-3 document are signed in accounting and sent to Administration for the Associate Superintendent's signature, and the Superintendent's designee signature (Bruce Williams). Once all signatures are collected here, the documents are sent to State Purchasing for approval and signature by State Purchasing and State Finance.

Important Notes:

State Purchasing was asked if the School Board could choose another vendor other than the one selected by the evaluation committee at the end. Their answer was no. If the Board wanted to be involved to that degree they needed to be the evaluation committee or have representatives on the committee (Dixie Allen and Craig Coleman were on the evaluation committee) for HB 15. Every member but 1 of the evaluation committee chose the awarded offeror as their top choice.

We have a legally executed and signed contract as of 12/21/12 with AIR for HB15. If the Board decides to approve the contract it would reflect the representatives they placed on the committee, if they decide to not approve it, we would have to start from the beginning on this solicitation/procurement to move forward in anyway. The Procurement Code and Purchasing policies and procedures say nothing in regards to a Board to approve a contract that representatives of the board have worked on. I also believe that AIR would have grounds for protest and further legal action if this were the case. If the Board decides to just delay this, then we are missing out on a huge benefit of the only offeror that was planning such an early implementation schedule.

During the September 7th Board meeting I believe it was Laurel who expressed it best, stating something to the effect that she had never seen the Board so involved in an RFP before, and was not going to vote on the issue because it was a question of ethics whether the RFP moved forward with the formative piece in it or not. It was voted to move forward with it. The Procurement Code, which is law, simply does not account for an elected Board to approve these documents or their outcomes. The Procurement Code is being changed each session over the next two sessions at least. My expertise is in purchasing; that is what I do every day. There are experts here in many areas that do them every day and are responsible for them. That is why they are selected for their expertise on these projects.

Link to the Procurement Code and Purchasing Polices:

http://purchasing.utah.gov/policies/index.html

3. Who was awarded the contract to assist Utah in developing and administering the computer adaptive assessment system?

Founded in 1946, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit corporation with more than 1,600 full-time staff. AIR has become one of the leading assessment providers in the country.

AIR has 60 years of experience in aptitude and proficiency testing, including 37 years in K–12 educational assessments. Over the years, AIR staff have worked on 40+ state and national assessments (e.g., NAEP, the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, the Voluntary National Tests), on international assessments (e.g., TIMSS, PISA), and on assessments in Brazil, Namibia, Honduras, Tajikistan, Macedonia, and other countries, by developing test blueprints and items, training teachers to develop items, and performing psychometric analyses

AIR is the nation's premier provider of online, adaptive accountability tests, offering such tests in four states (Delaware, Hawaii, Minnesota, Oregon). AIR's approach to adaptive testing meets all of the fairness criteria outlined by Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, an umbrella group of national representatives of the disability community. This approach has won federal, ESEA peer approval each time it has been reviewed. Last year, AIR delivered over 4 million online adaptive tests as part of state accountability programs in Delaware, Hawaii, Minnesota and Oregon. In addition to providing online assessment services, AIR provides statewide paper-and-pencil ESEA-approved accountability testing services in Ohio, New Mexico and South Carolina (approximately 4 million tests).

AIR's commitment to test all students using a common online assessment system has led to ground-breaking innovations in accommodations and embedded supports. For example, students learning English can view test-question-specific dictionaries or translations, blind students can receive adaptive Braille tests including "tactile graphics" (graphics that they can feel). AIR's system offers dozens of other well-researched features that enable all students to show what they know and can do.

In many of the states where they are working, AIR has linked tests measuring the state standards to national and international norms and comparisons. These linkages tell parents and policymakers how their students are being prepared to compete in the nation and the world. In addition, AIR has aligned state tests with national and international norms.

Technologies and approaches created at AIR are helping to transform testing in the nation. AIR has developed many new ways to test students' ability to apply their content area knowledge, so the student task is no longer just to select a correct answer from a list of options. Using sophisticated simulation technologies, students interactively design experiments, illustrate concepts manipulate texts and undertake other real-world activities to measure what they know and can do. Through our innovation in measurement and accessibility, the American Institutes for Research is fulfilling our mission of improving people's lives by developing and applying the best science.

Summary of Recent Experience

In K-12 assessment, AIR is successfully supporting state assessment projects across the country, delivering approximately 8 million tests (4 million online adaptive tests) for more than 2 million students each year.

- 3 million paper/pencil assessments for 1 million students in Ohio, including Grades 3-8 and the high-stakes Ohio Graduation Tests annually since 2003
- 2 million online, adaptive interim and formative assessments for 335,000 students in Oregon annually since 2007
- 1 million Online adaptive interim and summative assessments in Hawaii (120,000 students) and Delaware (100,000 students) annually since 2009
- Dual paper/pencil and online (fixed form and adaptive) testing program delivering
 1.4 million assessments for 500,000 students in Minnesota since 2011
- Alternate Assessments of Students with Disabilities in Ohio, Minnesota, Hawaii, Oregon, South Carolina, and New Mexico
- Tests of English language acquisition on paper in Ohio and via computer in Oregon

AIR is involved with the multiple research grant-funded projects with states on modified assessments, and other research and support projects. AIR is one of at least 21 contractors¹ supporting the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, with a primary focus on the online adaptive testing technology. AIR is also one of the nation's leading organizations in value added modeling, supporting statewide programs in Florida, New York and Texas, along with other jurisdictions.

ThoughtWorks; WestEd; Wireless Generation.

¹ Other Smarter Balanced contractors include CJC Consulting, LLC; Council for Aid to Education (CAE); College Board; CTB/McGraw-Hill; Data Recognition Corporation (DRC); DCE Educational Communications; Education First; Educational Testing Service (ETS); GMMB; HumRRo; JBL Associates, Inc.; Measured Progress; Michael W. Stetter & Associates; Navigation North; Pacific Metrics; Pearson; Rose & Greene, LLC; Shell Centre Publications;

4. What is the new computer adaptive assessment system?

The comprehensive computer adaptive assessment system is specifically designed for Utah to measure the full breadth and depth of the new Utah Core Standards. The system will have the following components:

Summative Adaptive Assessment

This online adaptive assessment will replace the CRTs and be given during approximately the same spring window. A variety of question types will be used leveraging the most current technology. Individual results will be available immediately. Language arts, mathematics and science will be assessed in grades 3-12. The assessment will support all students with the tools needed for an equal opportunity to effectively access and use the online adaptive test without distraction.

Interim

This optional online adaptive assessment is designed to be administered in the fall and midyear to evaluate student learning of the new Utah Core Standards and provide immediate feedback for teachers, parents and students. It will be psychometrically predictive of the summative assessment and utilize the same student interface and reporting system. Use of this system will provide LEAs with accurate fall to spring growth data.

Formative

This optional online formative assessment system is designed to replace and expand what is currently provided by UTIPS (current formative tool provided by USOE) and will present items in a manner that matches the interim and summative assessment system.

The system will offer resources to support teachers and students as they strive for success. It will include lesson plans and instructional resources, as well as formative assessments. The system incorporates feedback to students and their teachers, as well as the ability to compile a portfolio of work for students over time.

System features will include the following:

- 1. Provides teachers and students with standards aligned resources such as assignments, activities, and lessons linked with various learning modalities to enhance student learning
- 2. Guides instructional decisions by providing teachers access to roster and individual student score reports with detailed information about student performance
- 3. Supports differentiated instruction by providing teachers access to materials for individual students based on performance data on each benchmark
- 4. Empowers students to manage their own progress based on individual score reports and feedback, and guide their own learning by providing access to instructional resources based on areas of strength and weakness
- 5. Serves as a formative assessment system for both teachers and students with access to score reports and feedback

USOE will oversee and approve all aspects of system development and implementation while involving LEAs in step of the process.

5. Will low and high achieving students be accurately assessed?

Yes. This is the most compelling reason to move to an adaptive system. This will allow Utah to have a system designed to measure the full range of depth and content for each and every student independent of student ability level. In the current fixed form test every student is given the same items. Most of the items are in the middle of the achievement scale so as to be appropriate for the highest number of students. This means high achieving students get items that are too easy and low achieving students get items that are too difficult. So this fixed form design does not allow accurate measurement of the students at the two achievement extremes of high and low.

In the adaptive assessment students will be assessed at different levels of difficulty from the lowest end to the highest end and every point in between. The system will adapt, present easier or harder items, depending on student responses. This allows students to be given most of the test items at the appropriate level of difficulty.

At the same time, the test will present each student the full range of grade-level content. It is important to measure each student on the grade-level content to ensure that educators teach the full, on-grade curriculum to each student. The difficulty of test items can vary quite dramatically, even when all items measure the grade-level content. Exhibit 1 provides an example of this.

Exhibit 1, taken from the item bank from another state, represents the difficulty of items that measure one particular grade 8 math content standard. The horizontal axis represents item difficulty, and the dots represent the items in the bank, which may be administered on an adaptive test. The line between "Approach" and "Proficient" represents on-grade-level performance. Notice that even on a single content standard (a single, specific grade-level skill) the items range in *difficulty* from well below to well above grade level. Students performing well below grade level can be assessed on grade-level content, just using easier items.

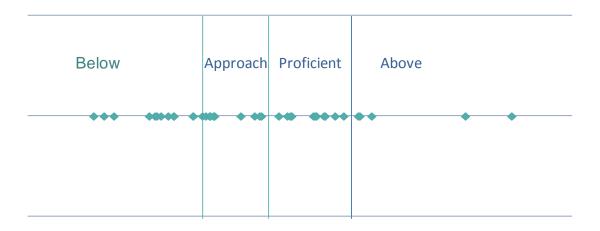


Exhibit 1: Range of difficulty of items measuring a single on-grade skill

Keeping to on-grade-level content ensures that teachers know what to teach and that students know what they must learn. Imagine, for example, if a science test went off-grade to find easier items. The science curriculum includes the following topics at grades 4-6:

- 4th weather
- 5th solar system
- 6th rocks

It would make little sense to give a struggling 5th grade student questions about weather. Instead, the student would get easier questions, below grade level in difficulty, about the solar system. A higher achieving student would not be given questions about rocks but more difficult questions about the solar system.

6. Will the assessment include national norms?

In order to have national norms you must have a statistically representative national sample of students who have been instructed in the new core standards assessed with an instrument designed specifically to measure those standards.

States are still in the process of transitioning to the new core standards and assessment vendors are still in the process of producing assessments which measure the new core standards. There are currently no national norms for the new common core or Utah Core Standards. While norms exist for other curricula and content standards, they cannot indicate where Utah's students stand relative the common-core standards.

Over time, we expect to be able to link our test to the common-core tests used in other states and obtain valid national norms in that way.

7. What is the implementation timeline?

The new assessment system will be completely implemented by the fall of 2014.

- Spring 2013- CRTs and NWEA assessments administered for the last time
- Fall 2013- New formative system available for teachers.
 This system replaces UTIPS, however, UTIPS will be available and supported until the transition is complete.
- Spring 2014- Operational Field Test for Summative
 The use of an operational field test will allow Utah to avoid double testing and replace the CRTs in spring 2014. The results for the operational field test will not be available until July 1, 2014.

 In all future years the results will be available immediately.
- Fall 2014 Interim Tests
 The interim tests will be fully operational by the fall of 2014 and provide immediate results which are psychometrically predictive of performance on the summative assessment. No items will appear on the interim assessment without having been previously piloted in the summative assessment.
- Spring 2014 Summative Assessment
 The summative assessment will be fully operational for the spring 2014 administration. Results will be available immediately.

8. What is the transition plan?

Transition activities will begin immediately upon finalization of the contract by the board of education. Initial activities will include but not be limited to the following:

Communication

- Updated information posted weekly on the USOE website including an ongoing FAQ document
- Monthly webinars by USOE to provide transition updates and answer questions from the field
- Monthly update at State Board of Education meeting
- Regular updates to LEAs through USSA and director meetings
- AIR Executive Vice President Jon Cohen, February 7 & 8, 2013 presentations to stakeholders

Item and Test Development

- Transfer of existing UTIPS items into AIR formative system
- Transfer of existing CRT items into AIR system for evaluation and alignment
- Blueprint construction for the summative assessments
- New item development for the summative and interim systems

Technology

- Disseminate system technology requirements to assist LEAs in evaluating technology readiness.
- Encourage LEAs to complete the Technology Standards Self-assessment Rubric
- The AIR system works on the broadest range of technology platforms (oldest to newest).
 This includes all platforms used currently in the CRT CBT system and expands availability to iPads and Chromebooks.
- The key issue for LEAs may be computer availability because in addition to the spring summative window there will now be available fall and winter interim testing windows.
- USOE will work with LEAs to determine current capacity and future needs.

9. What assessment reports will be available?

AIR will be providing a robust custom web based reporting system designed to meet USOE specifications. USOE will involve LEAs in this design process.

AIR proposal describes it as follows:

A reporting system that meets the needs of stakeholders while fostering communication among parents, educators, and students and contributing to instructional decision-making. AIR's proposed system is designed to provide timely, relevant reports to various stakeholder groups while guiding those stakeholders to make valid, actionable interpretations of the data. Our reporting system is designed to leverage the information available in computer adaptive test results to help bridge the gap between interim assessment results and targeted formative assessment.

To help guide valid instructional decision-making, the reporting system must provide meaningful, actionable reports. As test results come pouring in from the computer adaptive tests, the reporting system updates every report in real time so that stakeholders have immediate access to the information they need about students' strengths and weaknesses.

Navigation in the reporting system is designed to mirror the instructional decision-making process. The user can intuitively navigate in any of the three dimensions inherent in the data, and these three dimensions parallel the three kinds of questions that the data can help the user answer:

- **1. Who?** The data can be displayed at levels of aggregation anywhere from the individual level for a specific student up to the entire state. Demographic breakdowns are immediately available at any level of aggregation.
- **2. What?** The subject area data can be broken down into finer or coarser "chunks" of content. Navigating this dimension allows the user to travel from subject to content strand to benchmark and back.
- **3. When?** When data are available over time, the system allows the user to view a data trend over time or toggle to a fixed point in time.

10. What are the terms of the AIR contract?

This is a five year contract totaling 39 million dollars over the length of the contract. Deliverables include design, creation and delivery of all system components.